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Implementation of recommendations on the six mandated areas of the Forum and on the Millennium Development Goals

Information received from Governments

Russian Federation

Summary

The Russian Federation stated that the protection of human rights and interests of indigenous peoples was one of its priorities and expressed its support for the Second International Decade of the World's Indigenous People. The present report provides an overview of the situation of indigenous peoples in the Russian Federation and highlights initiatives and activities undertaken by the Russian Federation to implement the recommendations of the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues.

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Information from the Russian Federation on nationwide measures to implement the recommendations of the United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues

1. Issues related to protection of the rights and interests of indigenous peoples are given priority by the Government of the Russian Federation.

2. A system of special legislation and regulations to protect the rights of the indigenous population has been established in the Russian Federation. Pursuant to Federal Act No. 82 of 30 April 1999 on Guarantees for the Rights of the Small Indigenous minorities of the Russian Federation, small indigenous minorities are defined as peoples living on their ancestors' traditional territories, preserving a traditional lifestyle and livelihood, who number fewer than 50,000 in the Russian Federation and who consider themselves autonomous ethnic communities. Federal Act No. 104 of 20 July 2000 on the General Principles for Organizing Communities of Small Indigenous Minorities of the North, Siberia and the Russian Far East introduced the new designation "small indigenous minorities of the North, Siberia and the Russian Far East". The designation was further defined to reflect the special legal situation of these peoples. Government Decision No. 255 of 24 March 2000 concerning a unified list of small indigenous minorities specified what confers that status, as did Government Order No. 536 of 17 April 2006 confirming the list of small indigenous minorities of the North, Siberia and the Russian Far East.

3. In accordance with these instruments, the Government includes 45 ethnic groups, comprising some 280,000 persons, in the category of small indigenous minorities in the Russian Federation. This group of peoples includes 40 indigenous minorities of the North, Siberia and the Russian Far East, comprising 244,000 persons. Small indigenous minorities are clustered in communities in more than 30 constituent entities of the Russian Federation.

4. Because the traditional lifestyle of these minorities is vulnerable, systematic Government action to preserve their culture and traditional lifestyle is a matter of pressing concern.

5. Russia pays particular attention to international projects to protect the rights of indigenous peoples and was one of the first States to announce officially its participation in the Second International Decade of the World's Indigenous People. The Government Order on the preparation and observance in the Russian Federation of the Second International Decade of the World's Indigenous People was a significant instrument in this respect.

Pursuant to Government Order No. 758 of 27 May 2006, the Ministry of Regional Development, working with interested federal executive branch agencies and executive agencies of the constituent entities of the Russian Federation, has drafted a Government Order to approve the integrated plan of activities for the preparation and observance of the Second International Decade of the World's Indigenous People (hereinafter referred to as the integrated plan). Events during the Second International Decade of the World's Indigenous People will involve more than one third of the constituent entities of the Russian Federation. At present, the Russian Government has instructed interested federal executive agencies to negotiate a set of priority measures for the observance of the Second International Decade of the World's Indigenous People in the Russian Federation.

6. The Ministry of Regional Development is analysing past experience of cooperation between industrial concerns and small indigenous minorities and strengthening compensatory and other measures at the federal level in the form of appropriate regulations and legislation. In order to develop a strategy for interaction between representatives of small indigenous minorities and industrial concerns operating on the territory where those minorities live, it was decided to establish a working group on the subject within the Ministry of Regional Development consisting of representatives of the federal and regional executive branch agencies, and community organizations of small indigenous minorities and business enterprises. In addition, work in now being done on a method for assessing the harm caused to such minorities by industrial development of the territory where they pursue a traditional livelihood. Representatives of the following companies are involved in this project: Gazprom, NOVATEK, Surgutneftegaz, Transneft, BP Russia, Lukoil, as well as representatives of the Ministry of Natural Resources, the association of indigenous minorities of the North, Siberia and the Far East and VISHAGI CENTRE.

7. In pursuance of Government Order No. 185 of 21 February 2005, the Ministry of Regional Development is preparing regulatory documentation on the establishment of territories of Traditional Natural Resource Use (TTNU) of the small indigenous minorities of the North. In accordance with Federal Act No. 49 of 7 May 2001 on the Territories of Traditional Natural Resource Use by the Small Indigenous Minorities of the North, Siberia and the Russian Far East, such territories are one type of specially protected natural territory. The law serves as a framework, and its implementation will require the development of Government regulations creating a mechanism for the establishment and functioning of such territories. The Ministry of Regional Development has initiated consideration of the idea of a regulatory basis for the establishment of TTNUs of federally significant small indigenous minorities. A draft text on a model TTNU of such minorities in Bikin (Primorsky Territory) has been prepared. On 30 May 2006, an interagency meeting was held at the Ministry of Regional Development to discuss the draft. Participants made a number of constructive proposals and comments, and the draft was modified accordingly. The modified draft will be agreed upon in the relevant ministries and agencies.

8. The Ministry of Regional Development is also working on a draft Concept for the sustainable development of small indigenous minorities.

9. In accordance with the existing legislation, a number of social welfare measures, and particularly medical care, are provided to such minorities. For example, in accordance with article 8, paragraph 9, of Federal Act No. 82 of 30 April 1999 on Guarantees for the Rights of the Small Indigenous Minorities of the Russian Federation, all such minorities receive free medical care, including a compulsory annual check-up at State and municipal health-care facilities under the Programme of State guarantees concerning the provision of free medical assistance to citizens of the Russian Federation.

10. On 27 July 2001, the Government adopted Resolution No. 564 approving the special federal programme "Economic and Social Development of Small Indigenous Minorities of the North up to the year 2011". The Programme is being implemented in 29 constituent entities of the Russian Federation. Funding for the Programme has been doubled (from 103 million rubles in 2005 to 205.6 million rubles in 2006).

Spending under the Programme for 2007-2008 will amount to 207.2 million rubles annually. The Ministry of Regional Development is currently working on a concept for a new special federal programme "Economic and Social Development of Small Indigenous Minorities of the North, Siberia and the Far East up to the year 2015", to be launched in 2009. It is planned to include in the concept for the new programme funding of measures for the economic and social development of small indigenous minorities of the North, as well as scientific research.

11. The focus of State policy for the North is to improve the demographic situation, reduce death rates, particularly among children and those of an age to work, by establishing a system of medical services able to treat all population groups by means of prenosological diagnosis, preventive measures of correction and prevention of pathological conditions.

12. In order for all these measures to success, it will be necessary to have adequate scientific backup, to continue research on the epidemiology of communicable and non-communicable diseases among the indigenous population of the North, to study the effectiveness of the existing health-care system, to design and introduce new arrangements for the delivery of medical care and to seek new ways and means of protecting and rehabilitating the environment.

13. In order to promote and coordinate scientific research on the problems of the peoples of the North, the Ministry of Health and Social Development organized and conducted an international scientific conference at Khanti Mansky on 29 and 30 September 2005 on the medical and social problems of small indigenous minorities of the North. The conference considered such questions as:

- Trends in the medical and demographic situation and health of small indigenous minorities of the North, and the underlying reasons;
- Characteristics of the morbidity of such minorities at the current stage of development of society, factors influencing the possibility of changing them;
- Organization of medical assistance in sparsely populated regions.

14. Significant support to residents of the northern regions of the country and to the indigenous national groupings as regards quality and accessibility of medical care is provided by the priority national project in the sphere of health care, under which measures are being taken to protect public health by:

- Emphasizing the preventive side of medical care (preventive examinations, check-ups, vaccinations, etc.);
- Improving the material and technical bases of the front line of health care, ambulance services, maternity services;
- Resolving personnel issues, increasing financial incentives for medical workers in the provision of quality medical care;
- Ensuring that medical care uses the latest technology.

15. it is extremely important for the northern territories experiencing an unfavourable demographic situation to be included in the priority national project concerning health-care measures to reduce mortality from preventable causes, diseases causing high mortality among the population and occupational diseases.

16. The goal of the priority national project concerning health care is to lay the foundations and create the conditions for making the front line of health care more efficient and stronger, taking into account the social infrastructure existing in the regions, the settlement pattern and other special features.

17. In this connection, the Ministry of Health and Social Development issued instruction No. 584 on arrangements for the organization of medical services to the population based on the microdistrict principle. This instruction covers the Far North districts and comparable localities, mountainous, desert and arid districts (localities) and others with extreme climatic conditions and long periods of seasonal isolation, as well as sparsely populated localities and takes into account their characteristics.

18. In pursuance of this instruction, 920 sparsely populated microdistricts were set up on 1 December 2006, staffed by 1,840 medical workers included in the federal register and remunerated in accordance with established practice.

19. According to section B, paragraph 7, of the report of the Permanent Forum, diabetes mellitus is one of the most common non-communicable diseases in the Russian Federation, including among indigenous peoples.

20. In order to obtain up-to-date information on the situation with regard to diabetes mellitus, the State Diabetes Registry organizes monitoring of the quality of medical care provided to diabetics and of their state of health.

21. Government Order No. 706 of 11 December 2006 approved the Concept of the special federal programme "Prevention and treatment of socially significant diseases (2007-2011)". This includes programmes relating to diabetes mellitus, tuberculosis, HIV, cancer, sexually transmitted diseases, viral hepatitis, psychic disorders, arterial hypertension and vaccination.

22. The diabetes mellitus subprogramme is designed: to reduce the incidence of diabetes mellitus; to improve measures for preventing complications of the disease; and to raise the average life expectancy of diabetics.

23. The methods used in this subprogramme are: improved methods of preventing and diagnosing diabetes mellitus, treatment and rehabilitation of diabetics, including development and introduction of high-technology methods of treating the disease and its complications; development and implementation of training programmes for diabetics on the prevention and treatment of diabetes mellitus.

24. Accordingly, in the context of implementation of the Concept of the federal special programme "Prevention and treatment of socially significant diseases (2007-2011)", there will be broad focus on finding a solution to the problem of the high incidence of diabetes mellitus by means of improved delivery of specialized medical care and implementation of training programmes for diabetics.

25. With the aim of preventing the spread of socially dangerous diseases and HIV/AIDS (section B, paragraph 36, of the report), programmes are under way to improve disease prevention, adopt an ongoing system for informing the public about preventive measures, organize and implement a healthy lifestyle publicity campaign and prevent HIV infections and other socially dangerous diseases among indigenous peoples, especially girls and young people of reproductive age. Attention will be focused on the introduction into the curricula of primary, general secondary and higher vocational establishments of special courses on prevention of HIV infections

and drug addiction by encouraging healthy and safe behaviour by men and women, boys and girls and representatives of indigenous peoples.

26. Efforts are concentrated on women because of the low standard of living, lack of work and prevalence of asocial phenomena such as drunkenness and alcoholism.

27. The system of social rehabilitation of persons suffering as a result of family violence is important in preventing such violence. Lead roles in this system are played by the public welfare agencies and institutions of various kinds that provide families, children and women with significant practical medical, psychological, pedagogical and legal services, offering assistance in complex interpersonal situations and helping to solve countless family and psychological problems. These institutions are operational in all the constituent entities of the Russian Federation. The most highly developed ones are the territorial family and child social aid centres, which are basic multidiscipline facilities providing various kinds of social services. At the beginning of 2006, there were 3,444 institutions under the jurisdiction of the social welfare agencies of the constituent entities of the Russian Federation and of the local authorities (compared with 3,373 in 2004).

28. The financial assistance to families with children provided at the State level is a means of overcoming family poverty and enabling women to combine their professional and family roles.

29. During 2006, important legislation was adopted to improve financial support to citizens with children and as a result allowances for mothers and children were increased.

30. The maximum pregnancy and childbirth allowance was increased to 16,125 rubles (it had been 11,700 rubles in 2004 and 12,480 rubles in 2005). The one-time allowance for the birth of a child is 8,000 rubles (4,500 rubles in 2004 and 6,000 rubles in 2005).

31. In accordance with Federal Act No. 207 on the Introduction of Changes in Certain Legislative Instruments of the Russian Federation as concerns State Benefits for Citizens with Children, the social benefits for families in connection with the birth and upbringing of a child were significantly increased. Since 1 January 2007, working mothers have received a monthly childcare allowance amounting to 40 per cent of their wages, with a ceiling of 6,000 rubles. For the care of two or more children under the age of 18 months, allowances are cumulated. The cumulative amount of the allowance may not exceed 100 per cent of wages and may not be less than the cumulated minimum amount of the allowance.

32. The minimum amount for the childcare allowance is set at 1,500 rubles for the first child and 3,000 rubles for the second child and subsequent children.

33. This allowance is paid to the mother, father, other relative or guardian actually caring for the child who is on childcare leave and is subject to compulsory social insurance.

34. Entitlement to this allowance has been acquired by unemployed citizens who are actually caring for a child under the age of 18 months and are not subject to compulsory social insurance. They are paid the minimum amount: 1,500 rubles for care of the first child and 3,000 rubles for care of the second child and subsequent children. Allowances of all types are paid to women regardless of nationality.

35. Another factor expanding women's opportunities in the sphere of work and employment is the existence of a network of accessible and high-quality preschool institutions.

36. In order to broaden the coverage and accessibility of preschool institutions, there is a ceiling on the amount that parents pay for such institutions. For example, the parental payment for maintaining a child in a preschool institution may not exceed 20 per cent of wages or 10 per cent of wages for parents with three or more minor children. For children with developmental problems, no payment is required.

37. Starting in 2007, part of the amount actually paid by parents for maintaining a child in a preschool institution is reimbursed: 20 per cent for the first child; 50 per cent for the second child and 70 per cent for the third child and subsequent children.

38. The programmes to boost employment, reduce unemployment and develop small family enterprises adopted in the constituent entities of the Russian Federation will be important in eliminating discrimination on grounds of gender and nationality. They pay special attention to measures to promote the employment of vulnerable categories of women among the indigenous peoples.

39. The employment programmes envisage assistance in finding suitable work and job placement by employment agencies, including free vocational guidance and psychological support, vocational training, retraining and refresher courses and promotion of self-employment and small-scale entrepreneurship.

40. The employment promotion programmes also include support for traditional popular occupations, development of work schedules suitable for women (shorter working day) and work at home.

41. In the Russian Federation, ethnonational education problems are governed by the Constitution and by several laws: on the Languages of the Peoples of the Russian Federation, on the State Language of the Russian Federation, on Education and also by the concepts on the State national policy of the Russian Federation (approved by Presidential Decree in June 1996) and on the modernization of Russian education during the period up to 2010 (approved by Government Order in December 2001).

42. In August 2006, the Ministry of Education and Science approved the Concept of the national (ethnonational) education policy of the Russian Federation, defining the current priorities of State education policy, in the light of the multi-ethnic character of Russian society. This document envisages the reaffirmation of the existing Concept of the development of education for small indigenous minorities of the North, Siberia and the Far East and also refers to the indigenous minorities' problems in the area of education and notes that assistance will be given in solving them, including financial assistance from both federal and regional education authorities.

43. The most pressing tasks in this area for which practical solutions will be found in 2007-2010 include: improvement of the level of professional training and skills of academic and teaching personnel at educational institutions where the general curricula include an ethno-cultural regional (national regional) component, with instruction in native (non-Russian) and Russian (non-native) languages, and where theoretical and methodological work is being done on ethnonational problems in education; creation of a new generation of textbooks on humanitarian cycle subjects,

adopting a bicultural and multicultural approach, including for different civilization/culture zones in the Russian Federation; creation of organizational and managerial mechanisms for ensuring availability and equal access to high-quality education taking into account local linguistic, ethnic, social and cultural characteristics, including for children of parents with a nomadic lifestyle.